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# INTEGRAL Yogja

Vol. VI, No. 2

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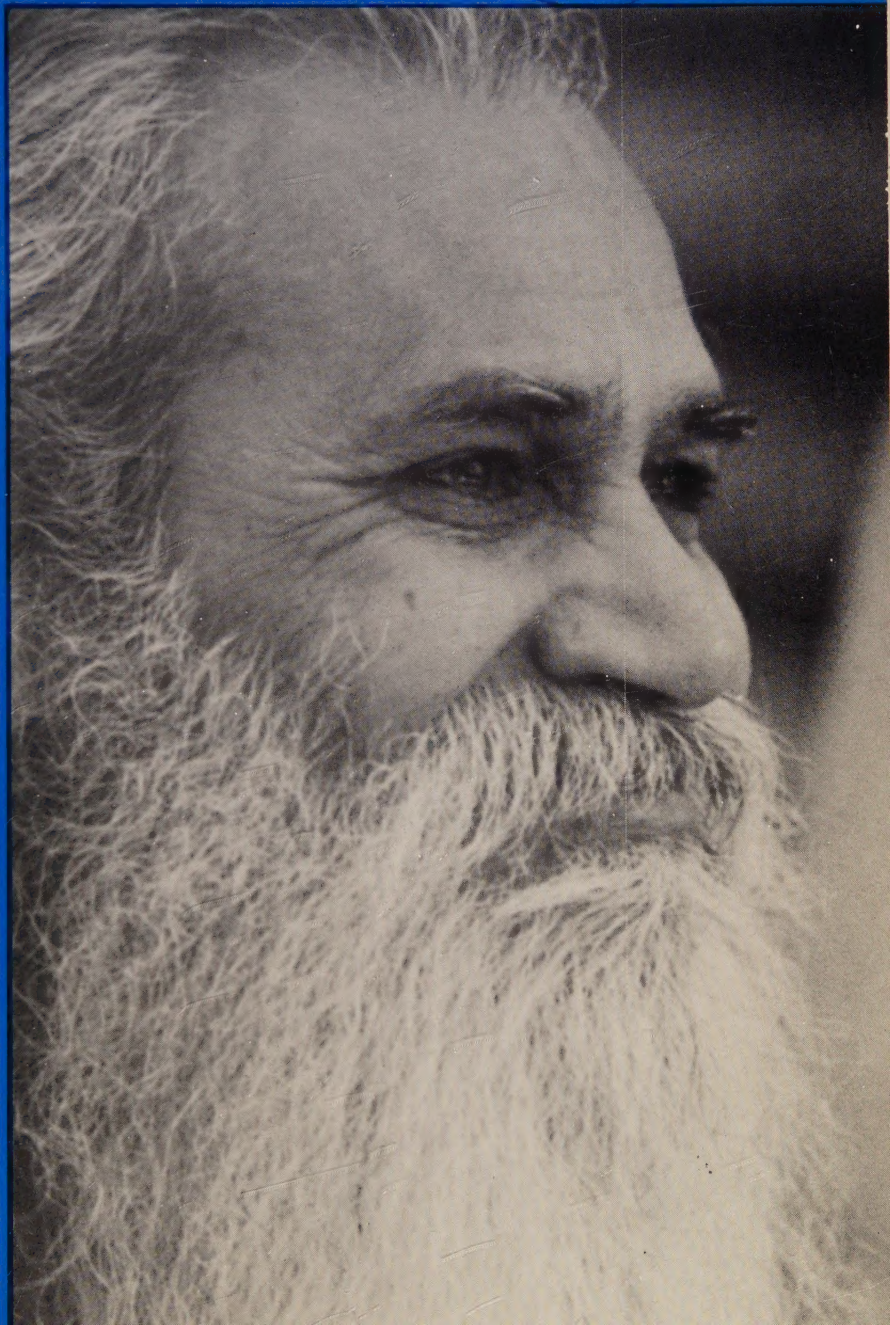
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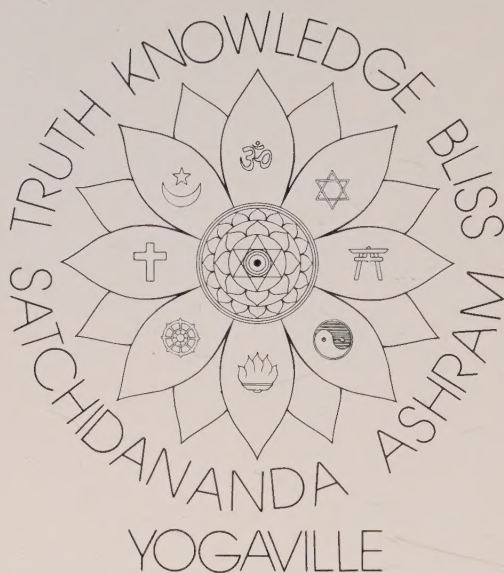
Swami  
Satchidananda

CHRISTIAN  
CONFRONTATION  
WITH BUDDHISM  
AND HINDUISM  
A reevaluation of  
the relationships  
among these major  
world religions  
by Brother David  
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YOGA  
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Sundlich

YOGA AND  
MEDICINE  
The first of a  
series of articles  
on the Yogic  
approach to  
medicine,  
both in principle  
and practice,  
by Dr. McLanahan  
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INTEGRAL YOGA — A magazine of the Integral Yoga Institutes.  
Volume VI, No. 2; June, 1975.

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Published by Office of Sri Gurudev (OSG), International Head-  
quarters of the Integral Yoga Institutes, at Satchidananda Ashram—  
Yogaville; Box 108, Pomfret Center, Connecticut 06259.

# letters

The following letters were recently received; the first is from Hamsa Otto, who visited us at the Ashram from her home in New Zealand last summer.

Beloved Swamiji!

Thank You for the beautiful name You gave the baby: Dayaban. It sounds so gentle and that is what he is.

Swamiji, it seems always to be me who gets everything in this world, while others are waiting and longing in vain. I can't believe that it was me who got initiated. And what a change it has made to me.

I was very lost when things went wrong for me and very proud when things went right. And now, there still are difficulties, but You are there, and the mantra and the meditation and the family, and I am not proud any more, because I know that it is not me who "did it."

Every day I do 1000 things wrong. I try to watch me, try to keep the peace, try to give it to others, but it is so difficult. I try and try again and will never give up, for I know that You never would "drop" me and say "she is not good enough" and when I think that, I nearly cry every time. I was very much afraid not to be good enough and now I know that everybody is good enough, everybody can try.

Swamiji, I love You. Thank You!

Hamsa

Dear Swami Satchidananda,

I want you to know how much you helped me by means of the letter in the Issue No. 22 of your magazine.

Your answer to a disciple who wanted your help because his wife

was dying, proved a much needed and valued guidance for me also. My husband passed away two months ago and after a forty-four year companionship it was hard for me to "let go."

I was bereft. I keep your advice in the magazine near my bed so that I read and reread it morning and night. I try to remember "he is going on in life." Your message reaches my heart. I try to understand the immediate and universal import of your words.

How I thank you, dear Swami. You have helped to alleviate the deep pain from my heart.

Yours devotedly,  
Ruth Golden

Beloved Swamiji,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for blessing me with the sacred mantra and initiation. My heart carries the prayer that I obtain the strength and wisdom to become a perfect yogi and set a perfect example of your teachings.

Always yours in Yoga,  
Susan Chase

P.S. I've just discovered this Tibetan "Song of the Eastern Snow Mountain" and have written it for you. It's as beautiful as you are, Swamiji.

'On the peak of the white snow mountain in the East

A white cloud seems to be rising towards the sky.

At the instance of beholding it, I remember my teacher

And, pondering over his kindness faith stirs in me.'



# Sri Swami Satchidananda

## How to Succeed in Yoga

The following article is adapted from a talk given by Sri Swamiji.

Yoga means to control the mind, to master the mind. Patanjali's Yoga Sūtras begin by saying, 'Control of thoughts is Yoga — Yoga chitta vritti nirodhah.' (I,2) But how is it to be done? Even the ideal disciple, Arjuna, says to Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, 'My mind is verily restless, turbulent and obstinate. I deem it as hard to control as the wind.' (VI,34) But here, Krishna gives a very helpful point:

'By practice and non-attachment the mind can be controlled.' (VI,35) This very same clue is given by Patanjali in his Yoga Sūtras also: 'Abhyasa vairagyaa-bhyaam nirodhah.' (I,12) Abhyasam and vairagyam mean practice and non-attachment.

### Practice

That means continuous practice, not just one day a week or five minutes in the morning or evening and the rest of the time you just do anything you want. No, the aim must be kept always. It's something like meditating for five or ten minutes in the morning, five minutes in the evening and then just leaving the mind uncontrolled and allowing it to go where it wants the rest of the day. Or like holding the rudder for only ten minutes and then just leaving it uncontrolled, letting the wind toss the boat any way it wants; you won't reach the shore.

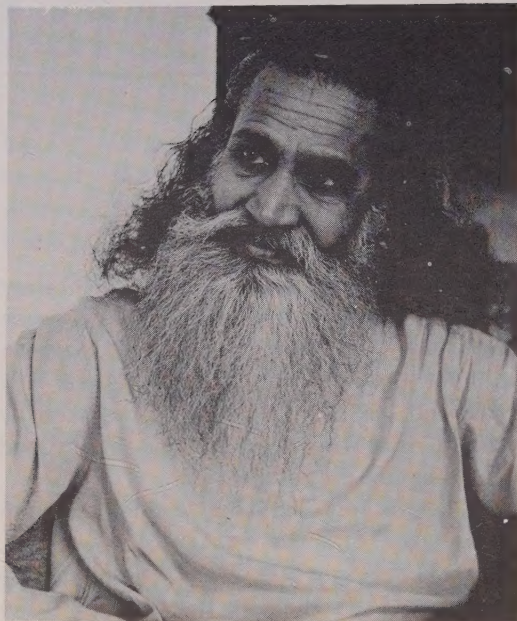
If you see a boat or a big ship, what is the most important thing there? The captain standing in front of the compass — the navigation. You set your boat to a particular degree, a particular direction.

If it is 180 degrees, you go completely straight, always 180 degrees. You may say, 'Oh, I'm just a couple of degrees off, it doesn't matter.' But where will you end up? You may say, 'I missed by only one or two degrees,' but at the end the distance is really great.

That is why constant attention, awareness, vigilance is necessary. Somebody must be holding the wheel, watching the compass. Is it going in the right direction or not? If by any chance you make a mistake, if you get caught by the wind, then you correct your course. The navigator must immediately work out the course correction. Either in a ship or a plane, without that course correction, you can never reach the destination. If you start in New York, wanting to end up in Los Angeles, probably you will end up in Miami!

Particularly if you read a little bit about flying, you see that there are so many things involved in it — tailwind, headwind, crosswind, temperature changes. You have to calculate all these things to see that your plane goes in the right direction. It's a beautiful lesson. I read a little about that and was fascinated. Just to fly a plane we need all these things. What about this plane, the body? Here also we have headwind, tailwind, crosswind, turbulence, how many things! If a big plane flies close by, you get great disturbance, you get pulled. So you have to be constantly at it. The pilot's work may even be easy, but the navigator's work is really difficult. We should be constantly at it. That is what you call practice. But mere working alone is not





enough, without proper *vairagya*, dispassion. I'm going to tell you a story to illustrate this point.

### *Two Boatmen*

Once upon a time there were two boatmen. They knew how to row, but they didn't own a boat. One day they wanted to steal a boat and go to a neighboring town on the River Ganges. So about midnight they came to the shore and found a rowboat. They were really well prepared. What kind of preparation? They had plenty of 'gasoline.' It was a rowboat, no? Rowboats don't need gasoline, but the rowers may need it. What I mean is, they were drunk! So they had plenty of 'high-octane gasoline.' They really filled up the tank. So they were slowly walking. You can imagine how they were walking, hm? They came down to the river and the minute they saw the boat they were so happy. 'Ah, we got a boat — come on, get in.' Then they found the oars also and started rowing. They were just singing a song and rowing the boat. All night they were doing it. Slowly the dawn came. Normally, as you know, on the Ganges in the early

morning people come to take a bath. So they saw a couple of people coming but the faces were familiar. 'That's strange,' they thought. 'How did they get here so easily? We have been rowing half the night.' By the time it was a little more clear, they began seeing all the familiar buildings.

'Hey, hey,' they said to the bathers. 'We are still in the same place. What happened?'

Then the bathers asked, 'Why? Why are you wondering what happened? What did you want to do? Whose boat is this?'

'Oh, no, no. We just wanted to go to the neighboring town and come back soon. We have been rowing the whole night. I don't know why we are still here.'

'You fools. You forgot to undo the knot. All the while you were tied to the shore.'

They had been practicing, no doubt, hm? Months and months and months of practice. 'Oh, I did all the *japa*; I did all the *pranayama*; I went to all the gurus. I practiced every technique.' No doubt. But unfortunately you are still tied down. You didn't take out your anchor.

### *Non-Attachment*

Mere practice alone is not enough. Let us know that positively. You must have that dispassion, which is called *vairagya* or non-attachment. I don't say those practices are no good. In a way, it's better than doing nothing. At least, instead of going to a movie, you are hearing about Yoga. If not in the boat and rowing the whole night, they would have been in the gambling den. That is an advantage, no doubt.

But you can't attain the goal, you can't reach the shore, unless these bondages are removed. Unfortunately, in our boats, we have not just one anchor — there are thousands of anchors everywhere. Everything that you call 'mine, mine, mine' is holding you. That's why I say if you want to know how far away you are from your



goal — call it God or peace — I can give you an easy method to check the distance. You want to know? The easiest way is to gather some paper and start writing down everything that you call 'mine.' My house, my body, my brain, my intelligence, my child, my wife, my money, my race, my country, my this, my that. List everything that you can call 'mine;' don't omit even one. If the list is really long, you are that far away from your goal. If you can reduce the list, you are coming closer. If there is nothing for you to write as 'mine,' you are there already. That's all. It's very simple. You don't need to practice anything. You don't even need to practice any other Yoga.

This is the essence. If you really want to get peace, the simplest way is to make a check, 'How many mines have I put around me?' The more mines around you, the more you are in trouble. Isn't it so? Because every 'mine' is ready to explode! You are making the whole life as a war-field, throwing 'mines' everywhere. If you have already thrown them, call a good mine-sweeper — the guru. Mine-sweeper or mind-sweeper. He will know how to take away the fuse. Once the fuse is taken away, there won't be confusion. How will he take the fuse out? He will just change the label. He will take the label away from all that you call 'mine, mine, mine,' and put 'Thine, Thine, Thine.'

#### *Use, But Don't Misuse*

That means dispassion. You are not attached to things. You can keep them around, but don't call them 'mine.' They have given me this chair. It's very comfortable, like a throne sitting here; it's fine. I can even say it is my seat as long as I am sitting in it. But when the lecture is over, I can't take it with me and go. It's only given to me for my use. Likewise everything, even your body, is given to you for your use, not just to pamper it, constantly standing in front of the mirror

for one and a half hours and patching everything. No. Use it. Don't misuse it.

A vehicle is given to you. Take good care of it. Put the proper fuel in it. If it is made for high octane, don't put crude oil into it. See that every nut and bolt is properly tightened — neither too tight nor too loose. Because sometimes people get too tight or too loose, is it not? Either way, there'll be trouble. It is all given to you for your use; not to own, not to possess. And that is what you call dispassion or detachment. When you use it, you have a responsibility to keep it clean, to use it properly. The responsibility is there. Don't think that because it's not yours, you can just do anything to it, or leave it. You are still responsible.

So this kind of detachment should be understood properly. You can't become irresponsible or just leave everything and run away. If you do, wherever you go you will still be attached to something. If you are not attached to your mansion, within a few weeks you'll be attached to your teepee. What does it matter? It makes no difference if it is a mansion or a teepee. It doesn't matter whether it is your nice suit, hat, tie, and coat, or all the patches on the worn-out jeans. What is the idea behind all the worn-out jeans? How many people are attached even to these jeans, with hundreds of patches. The dress is something to cover the body, that's all. It should be neat and clean. That's not going to bind you, as long as you are not attached to that and don't go to the other extreme.

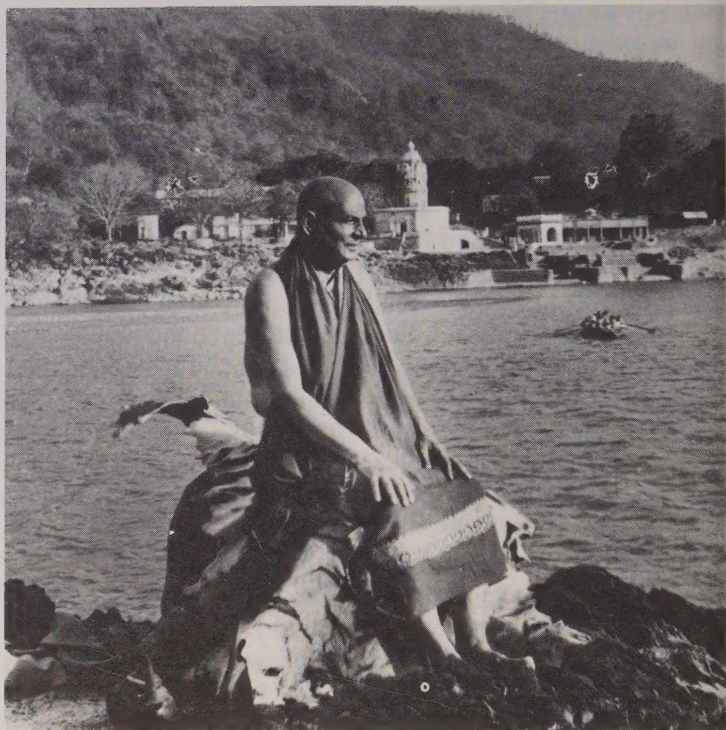
So unless there is non-attachment, practices will not bring much result. Side by side there should be *abhyasam* and *vairagya* — practice and non-attachment. They are the two wings of the bird and both are necessary. So with the help of these two wings, let your soul soar high to bring you perfect mastery over your own mind, to enjoy perfect peace and joy always.

Om shanthi shanthi shanthi.



# THOU ART THAT

## Swami Sivananda



Dear readers, I want to place before you one important point. I have no such words as *cannot, difficult, impossible* or *weakness* in my dictionary. Those who want to develop their will should remove these words from their dictionary also. They are the expressions of a weakling. Become a lion. Become a spiritual hero. By mere willing or chanting of Om, mountains should move. By mere willing, all the waves of the ocean should subside. Lord Jesus did this, and you can also do so. What one has achieved, another can if only he wills. This is the grand law of nature. Mother Nature is unbiased. She looks at all her children with equal vision.

Therefore, never entertain negative thoughts. Understand the glory, splendor and power of the Self which is at the back of your mind, thought and will. Understand the immortal nature of that hidden interpenetrating Essence. Know that this Self is the storehouse of all knowledge, bliss, power, peace and joy. Feel that the sun, the moon and stars perform their functions

at your command. Feel that the air moves, rain falls, rivers flow at your bidding.

Thou art the Sun of suns, Light of lights, Holy of holies, Glory of glories, God of gods. Thou art Truth, thou art the imperishable Self that pervades this whole universe. Assert your divine majesty. Realize your freedom and Satchidananda nature. Rest in that ocean of light, knowledge, love, peace, joy and bliss. Realize the significance of the great sentence of the glorious Upanishads: Tat Twam Asi — Thou Art That.

---

Swami Sivananda was the spiritual master of Sri Swami Satchidananda. Born in 1887, he spent most of his life in Rishikesh, in the foothills of the Himalayas. However, through the Divine Life Society, which he founded in 1936, through his hundreds of books, and through his many disciples, he has reached countless people around the world. In 1963, he entered Mahasamadhi, or final liberation from the body.



# Christian Confrontation with Hinduism and Buddhism

by Brother David Steindl-Rast, O.S.B.

Confrontation and interaction of the great spiritual traditions with one another is going on all around us. It may one day be recognized as the dominant theme of the age in which we are living. At present, it is at any rate a topic that concerns each one of us. Our understanding of what is really happening will depend on the way in which we tackle this topic. There are basically two approaches, one from the outside, the other from the inside. All we can do from the outside is to examine and compare forms; the living experience which creates and sustains these forms is accessible only by entering into it. It is this approach from the inside which we shall make our own here.

## *Man's Quest for Meaning*

We may start out with a general question: what is the driving force behind the great variety of man's religious expressions (those labeled as such and those possibly more truly religious for having escaped the label)? The answer is: the driving force is man's quest for meaning. This may serve us, in fact, as a working definition of religion (religion, of which the religions are so many different expressions): man's quest for ultimate meaning. Spirituality is, then, no more and no less than meaningful living, religion realized in daily life. The challenge is, then, to understand our own quest for meaning and so to get at the root from which all the different spiritual traditions

grow. There is nothing esoteric about all this. We are not speaking of mystical depths accessible only to the few. Our quest for meaning is so simple that it is at once personal and universal. Call it man's quest for happiness (which is precisely what it is) and it will sound much less formidable.

Happiness and meaningful life are inseparable. You may know people who appear to have whatever good fortune can give and are nevertheless desperately unhappy. And there are others who in the midst of raw misery are deeply at peace and — well, genuinely happy. See if you can find where the difference lies. When we go deep enough we find that the ones have found the one thing which the others are lacking: meaning in life. But we should not call meaning a 'thing.' It is, in fact, the one reality in our life which is no thing, yet more important to us than everything. Nor should we say that someone has found meaning, as if, once found, meaning could be safely kept for darker days. Meaning must be constantly received, like the light to which we must open our eyes here and now, if we want to see. One can strive for meaning; happiness is always a free gift, a surprise.

## *Man's Need for Meaning*

It is important at this point that we distinguish clearly between meaning and purpose. We must distinguish without separating them. The purpose of anything

we do is determined by its usefulness; not so the meaning. What a thing or an action means to me is determined not by its usefulness, but by my appreciation. Meaning is the value of even the useless. The things most meaningful to us are often superfluous. What would life be like without the glorious superfluities of flowers in your hair, of poetry, or simply of the candle we light at a festive meal, though there is plenty of electric light for utility? A mere operator has no appreciation for this. But again, we must distinguish without separating purpose from meaning. We need only watch a gondolier guiding his gondola through the traffic of a Venetian canal to realize that the perfect operator is a perfect dancer. There is nothing more superfluous than dance, yet nothing is more universally meaningful.

We must go one step beyond usefulness and appreciation in distinguishing purpose and meaning. In order to accomplish a given purpose I must be able to control the situation. And in order to be in control I must first grasp what it is all about: 'to grasp' — that is the right word with regard to purpose. I must grasp all details firmly, take hold of them as of so many tools. But when it comes to meaning, what is there to be grasped? On the contrary, I must allow myself to be grasped by whatever it is, before it can become meaningful to me. As the young people say: "How does this grab you?" Only when it "grabs" you will it mean something to you. But there lies a risk. As long as I am in control, not much can happen to me. As soon as I allow reality to "touch me," I am in for adventure. The quest for meaning is the adventure par excellence, and happiness lies in the thrill of this adventure.

### *Meaning and Word*

We in the West usually conceive of meaning as the significance of a sign or word. "This tells me something," we

say when a thing, an action or a situation has meaning for us. "It speaks to me," and thus it becomes, in the widest sense, a "word." In fact, we find it difficult to imagine that someone could focus on anything else when speaking of meaning.

The close association of meaning and word in the mind of Western man has deep roots. It goes back to two key intuitions, one Jewish, one Greek, which fuse and so strengthen one another. The Greek one hinges on the notion of *logos* (which is broader than our notion of "word," but certainly includes it); this is the notion that we can understand because we somehow have a share in the *logos*, the root and origin of everything that is to be understood. Understanding is possible because both existence and knowledge are governed by the same principle, the *Logos*. The Jewish intuition, which came to reinforce the word-aspect of this *Logos* notion, is as basic to Jewish religion as the *Logos* is to Greek thought; its simplest formula is "God speaks."

Martin Buber tells of Rabbi Zusya, one of the great Hasidic masters, that he was never able to quote the sayings of his teacher. For when Rabbi Zusya heard the introduction to the Scripture passage which his teacher was about to expound: "And God spoke...", he was so overcome with ecstasy and carried on so wildly that he had to be taken out. And then he stood in the hall or in the woodshed, it is told, beating against the walls and crying: "God spoke! God spoke!" And the story concludes: "One word is enough, for with one word can the world be uplifted, and with one word can the world be redeemed." The Old and the New Testament are linked together by this one Word. For if God really speaks, this implies that He is, so to say, involved with the world, and it follows — not out of any external necessity, but with the inner logic of the heart — that the Word should be made flesh, should reach a distance



from God beyond imagination, should enter into the very "bowels of the earth" (Matt. 12.40). God goes all the way.

### Meaning in Silence

The notion of "listening to the Word" is so fundamental to our Western concept of meaning that we must almost leap over our own shadow to realize the possibility of finding meaning not primarily in Word but in Silence. And yet, there is a whole vast tradition of spirituality in which meaning hinges not on the Word but on Silence. Just as the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition of spirituality is contained as in a seed in the one insight that "God speaks," so the key intuition of Buddhism is summed up in the celebrated saying, "I have heard the sound of no-sound." There is no aspect of Buddhist spirituality on which this dictum will not shed light.

We point, in the West, to a vase or an ash tray and ask: "What is this?" No matter how manifold the answers we receive, they will generally conceive of the thing as a certain material formed in a particular way: glass pressed or blown into a certain shape, clay shaped on a potter's wheel, fired and glazed. Of course. It never occurs to us that someone's bent of mind could be so different that the answer centers with the same directness on the empty space of our vase or dish. Surprise. "Empty space? Is that all?" "Well, of course, the emptiness has to be defined by this shape or that. But this is less important. What really matters is the emptiness of the vessel. Isn't this what makes it a vessel?" We must admit it, strange as this approach may seem to us; as strange as the "sound of no-sound," to which it is closely related.

When we look more deeply into it, we find that all this is not quite so strange as it may at first appear. After all, we too are aware (or should be aware) of the



Amida Buddha

intimate relatedness of silence and word to each other. The word would not be word without silence. The word is not truly word unless it is born of silence, embodies silence, returns into silence. Only the word that comes out of silence is more than chatter. And it must be received by silence, as seed is received by the silent furrows. Inexhaustible silence, always still greater, though it pour itself forever into word, comes to itself only in the word. Silence would not be silence without the word.

### A Trinity:

*Word, Silence, Understanding*

Silence, in this sense, is not the absence of word or sound. Silence is not characterized by absence but by presence, a presence too great for words. When we have some little joy or pain we are apt to talk about it. When joy or pain grows strong we rejoice or cry. But when bliss or suffering become overpowering — we

are silent. Any encounter with mystery is hidden in silence. (The very term "mystery" comes from *muein*: "to keep silent.") Mystery is not an empty emptiness but the incomprehensible Presence that touches us and renders us speechless as it imparts to us meaning.

Only by the tension between word and silence is meaning upheld. (Both "word" and "silence" are taken here in the most comprehensive sense, as two dimensions of all reality.) The moment we relax this tension, meaning escapes us; the moment we break the tension, meaning is broken. Failing to see the distinction between word and silence, a distinction greater and more basic than any other, would mean relaxing the tension; yet, pushing the distinction to the point of separation would break the tension. The point is that silence and word are distinguished as well as united by a third dimension of meaning, that of understanding.

After all, how do we understand? I would say, by allowing the word to lead us into silence until we truly hear the silence in and through the word. But more concretely, how does understanding come about in a dialogue? A true dialogue is more than an exchange of words; the "more" consists in an exchange of silence. This is where understanding comes in. For true understanding it is necessary that the silence within me should come to word and so reach out to you until it touches not only your ear and your brain but your heart, your still point, the core of silence within you. Thus, understanding is communication of silence with silence in and through the word.

### *Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism*

As soon as we re-establish Understanding in its proper place, we have gained a new horizon within which to view the relationship of Christian spirituality to Buddhism and Hinduism. If we can accept that man's quest for ultimate meaning

is the tap root of all spirituality, and if it is true that Word, Silence and Understanding together constitute the sphere of meaning, we can see the possibility that three different traditions within man's quest may focus each on a different one of these three dimensions of meaning. Of course, we are not speaking of three water-tight compartments but of dimensions which, though distinguishable, can never be separated from one another. Yet, we have seen that in our own tradition the focus on the Word is so strong that Silence and Understanding are almost crowded out of our field of vision; we have to make an effort to rediscover their proper place. Thus we should be able to appreciate that in other traditions Silence or Understanding may hold a place of pre-eminence comparable to the one which the Word holds in our own.

If we now consult the data of comparative religion, we find verified what at first sight would seem too good to be true. Jews, Christians and Moslems find ultimate meaning in the Word. Buddhists (as we have already briefly indicated) in Silence, in the emptiness which is fullness, in the nothing that gives meaning to everything. Understanding, in turn, which yokes together Word and Silence, is the central preoccupation of Hinduism. "Yoke" and "Yoga" stem from the same root, and Swami Venkatesananda gives voice to the deepest intuition of Hinduism when he states succinctly: "Yoga is simply Understanding." Admittedly, this sketchy scheme allows for about as much detail as a stamp-size map of the world. The obvious danger is oversimplification. Yet there are advantages to a reduction of scale. For one thing, we shall be less apt to overlook the forest for the trees.

Hinduism, for instance, is so vast and varied a jungle of religions and philosophies that one cannot blame anyone who despairs of finding a unifying principle behind it all. Yet, if there is one,





Swamiiji and Brother David. Photo by Oliver Bhanu Zurbel, age 2 years, 4 months.

it is the ever-repeated insight that God manifest is God unmanifest, and God unmanifest is God manifest. This is Understanding in our sense, understanding that the Word is Silence – Silence come to itself in the Word; understanding that the Silence is Word – Word, brought home. "God manifest is God unmanifest" is the Hindu parallel to Jesus' word: "I and the Father are one" [John 10.30]. Word and Silence are one, and it is in and through the Spirit of Understanding that they are one. Hindus have spent five thousand years or more cultivating, not a theology of the Holy Spirit (theology belongs to the realm of the Logos, the Word) but what must take the place of theology when the Spirit is accorded the place which the Word holds in our approach. Should this not give us hope that the encounter with Hinduism may tap new springs in the depth of our own Christian heritage?

In a similar way, Buddhism concentrates on a dimension which belongs to the Word, but has been somewhat neglected in Christian tradition. In what

would correspond to a theology of the Father (since theology can only be about the Father), silence would have to replace the medium of the word. Maybe Buddhists could teach us something in this field. When Buddhists speak of a door, they do not mean primarily frame, leaf, and hinges, as we do, but the empty space. When Christ says, "I am the door" [John 10.9] we are free to take this in the Western-Christian or in the Buddhist sense. Why should the latter be less Christian?

*Each Tradition  
Contains the Others*

It would fall short of the truth to claim that the great traditions of spirituality are complementary. In fact, it would be wrong to think that they could add up, as it were, to "the real thing." They are "the real thing" each one of them. They are not complementary but interdimensional. Each contains each, though with the greatest possible differences in accentuation. Each is, therefore, unique.

Each is, in its own way, superior. And what of the Christian claim to universality? Rightly understood, this is not some sort of colonial imperative; it points toward inner horizons. It makes demands of us Christians, not of others, challenging us to rediscover again and again the neglected dimensions of our own tradition, so as to become truly universal, truly catholic.

Not some theory, but our own experience must be the key to an understanding of the spiritual traditions with which we are confronted. For, if man's search for meaning in life is the root of spirituality, and happiness its fruit, we should be able to gain access to all its forms from the vantage point of our own familiar and very personal moments of happiness. What happens, then, in those happy moments when something really becomes meaningful to us? Say, the smile of a child, unexpectedly, in the midst of a crowd. Or a moment in which nothing happens while you sit in a parked car (when Nothing really happens to us!), or dancing. We are overcome. All we can say is: "This is it! Here is the answer to all my search for meaning, insignificant though it may seem to anyone else." But listen to what we are saying: "This is it." "This" stands for the smile, the moment in which nothing happened, the dancing – for trifles, "tremendous trifles," as Chesterton would say; and "it" stands for meaning – ultimate meaning in the last analysis, for whenever we truly open our heart, we open it unconditionally (to drink from the stream is to drink from its source). I can never decide which is the more amazing paradox: that "this" trifling thing or event should reveal to me "it," ultimate meaning; or that "it" on which all my happiness depends, should reveal itself to me in "this" trifle.

And so we go from meaningful experience to meaningful experience, saying: "This is it, and this, and this!" – so

many words, of the one Word in which meaning is spelled out to us. Maybe our Buddhist friend says the same, with a different emphasis: "This is it, and this is it too!" and for this and this and this there is only one "it," the one great Silence that comes to word in every word, the great Oneness in which all multiplicity comes to rest. But our Hindu friend can wholeheartedly agree with both versions (there lies the unifying power of Yoga): "This is it – fine! This is it – fine!" he says, "after all, what really matters is that this is it." This is understanding. Only when we can truly say this is it, have we understood.

Our own confrontation with mystery gives us, thus, the key for an understanding of the relationship between the spiritual traditions. Just as silence, understanding, and word imply one another, so do the Buddhist, Hindu, and Christian traditions. The Understanding which is the life-breath of Hinduism cannot be separated from Word and Silence which it dynamically unites. The silence into which Buddhists drop down their thoughts can be separated neither from the Word to which it gives birth nor from the Understanding through which the Word is brought home. Thus a true Buddhist is Hindu and Christian, whether he knows it or not. A true Hindu is Christian and Buddhist, whether he knows it or not. And let us add: a true Christian is Buddhist and Hindu, whether he knows it or not. To know it becomes increasingly more timely and more important.

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*This article was adapted from an essay by Brother David. This essay, and others by Brother David, are available from the Center for Spiritual Studies. The Center, of which Sri Swami Sat-chidananda is a co-founder, is a group comprising spiritual teachers from the different major faiths. Please see the ad on page 31 for their address.*



# Questions and Answers

Swami Satchidananda answers questions on prayer and devotion.

**Q** Please explain how to pray. I'm confused by the seeming contradiction between having trust in the Cosmic Plan and praying.

**A** There is no contradiction here. Probably your idea of prayer is wrong. When you pray, it is not to ask for this and that. Your prayer should be to be used by the Cosmic Plan. That's why in prayer we say, 'I am Thine, all is Thine Thy will be done.' Not to demand things. Some people do that. But how do you know if it is going to help you? Sometimes you may ask for something that will not help you. It may even hurt you.

So here, you trust God. Even without your asking, God is going to take care of you, no doubt. But if you still feel like asking, say, 'Father (or Mother), I'm yours. You do anything you want.' If you still want to add something, say, 'Let me have this kind of understanding always: that I am your child, that you are taking care of me every minute. Let me not forget this. Give me this boon of constantly remembering this truth.'

Because who is praying here? Not the pure Self in you. The pure Self never prays, never worries about anything. It is always the same. It is God already. Who is the person who prays? The ego. As ego, you go and say, 'As ego I may make mistakes; I may do things wrong. So I allow you to work through me.' That is what prayer is. You allow the ego to be handled by the Cosmic Con-

sciousness which you can call God. So there is no contradiction at all.

I've read that the great Yogi and Saint, Ramakrishna, used to weep in devotion to Divine Mother. But isn't it true that the more one develops spiritually the less emotional and the more discriminating one becomes?

It may not necessarily be so. You will always love your mother, however intelligent you are. Because you become intelligent do you want to analyze your mother? 'How did she become my mother? Since when?' No. There is always a heart. A discriminating person need not kill the heart.

And again, all great Jnanis (Yogis who follow the intellectual yogic path) were great devotees also. Persons like Sankara, the great Vedantin, very many times said that names and forms are completely unnecessary: 'Brahma satyam jagan-mithya jivo Brahmaivana na aparaha - Absolute Brahman is the Truth; all these names and forms are illusion.' But after saying this, he would go home, sit in front of the Goddess Saraswati and pray, 'Mother, help me. I'm just your child.'

So heart and head should go together. We don't want emotions which are colored by personal attachment. But devotion is not a personal attachment for selfish reasons. It benefits everybody.

# Haiku

by Anandi Friendlich

Let me begin by saying that my relationship to Haiku is one of humility. Written in the silence of the mind, I experience it as a literary form of meditation. Only after the initial outpouring can the mind, a useful tool, aid in perfecting the craft.

## *Like the Infinite Itself*

Highly meditative, Haiku is also deeply subtle and incredibly intimate. It is concerned with human emotions, rather than acts; and those phenomena familiar to us all – the seasons, the time of day, birdsong – are used to reflect those emotions. Yet always more than a statement of feeling or a picture of nature, Haiku creates an interior switch in viewpoint which gives birth in turn to a symbolic effect. Steeped in the eternal, yet reflecting shifting human emotions, this ancient Japanese verse form embraces the multiplicity of life with a rapturous awareness.

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I dreamt of life  
and lived a dream. In the distance  
a tinkling echo.

---

One might compare a Haiku poem to an Oriental painting in which a mountain towers in the distance, while in the foreground a human figure toils upward. There is understatement here, and implication. Through the discriminating use of space and silence, one is helped to grasp that which words cannot convey: the essence. Basho, considered by many to be the greatest Haiku master of all times, has said, "Haiku puts the least amount of words between ourselves and the truth..."

There are many types of Haiku, grave or gay, deep or shallow, sad or humorous, sacred (eg, Zen Haiku) or secular. But

all are records of high moments. The problem inherent in all poetry lies in saying ordinary things, in bridging the flat areas. By its very nature and size Haiku, a concentrate of pure poetry, avoids this danger. Its exacting seventeen syllables allows only the barest outline and the most important details, as in an ink drawing.

Reading Haiku is in itself an art, for Haiku is not expected to be complete. The reader is drawn into the poem's underlying mood, and must add his own associations and imagery, thus in a sense

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I've just now returned  
from the deep well of the moon!  
Breathless, still dripping.

---

becoming co-creator. To really absorb the poem, he has to reread it many times, with patience, without haste or insistence, almost as one would hold a Hatha Yoga pose. The elusiveness of good Haiku, one of its chief characteristics, comes not from haziness but because so much suggestion is put into so few words. Like the Infinite itself, it is filled with indirection, paradox and overtone. And as in meditation, illumination rises not from the well of the mind; but rather from the deeper well of the Self.

## *The Traditional Form*

Haiku began as a Japanese literary form about 700 years ago, and flourished in the seventeenth century. It originated as a Tanka – one person writing the first three lines, the second person finishing the last two; then eventually evolved into its present form: a three-line verse of seventeen syllables (the first and third lines containing five syllables, the second line containing seven).



Essentially, Haiku is a very short poem with a traditional, classic form and special characteristics of its own. It almost always contains a key word giving the season, directly or by inference. Such a key word, or *kigo*, is suggestive of the emotion traditional to that season – for seasons and change in weather are an experience common to all men. *Ki* is the Japanese word for season; *kigo* is a season-word (eg, autumn-wind, summer-heat) and it is introduced at some point in almost all Haiku, forming the background mood. Haiku implies, rather than states, and so over the years, as the verse form matured, even subtler suggestion evolved: Morning glories suggest fading beauty. Autumn winds suggest sadness. Plum blossoms suggest a promise of perfect beauty. A cuckoo (to the Japanese) suggests a bird of another world. Another form of association is comparison of two or more ideas, eg, “The tower is high, on a fir top sits a butterfly.” Still another form is the piling up of similar effects on different senses, eg, “A cloud rolls past, a robin calls, a leaf drifts.”

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One foot out the door,  
when It exploded in my breast –  
I stood, weeping.

---

On the one hand, discreet omission of specific words and elimination of unnecessary words is employed, while on the other hand there is deliberate usage of certain traditional words to imply the unsaid.

Naturally, an American writing Haiku will by the very nature of the difference in cultural reference, create a shift in the art form, in the angle of vision. Plum blossoms may become apple blossoms, a cherry tree an oak tree, and so on. But the universal heart striving within a traditional structure “to put the least amount of words between itself and the

truth” remains constant.

### *Willing Dependence*

I have found in my life that the greatest freedom lies not in willful independence, but rather in willing dependence on a Higher Will. In all we do, whatever we do, whether cooking, painting, fixing cars, making music, etc., what matters is the level of selflessness we bring to our work. We can either lock our inner door, insisting on the gratification of a private “creation”; or we can open wide this same door, allowing God’s sunshine to cast its glorious light.

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No sound or echo  
of their voices. At twilight  
I hear only You.

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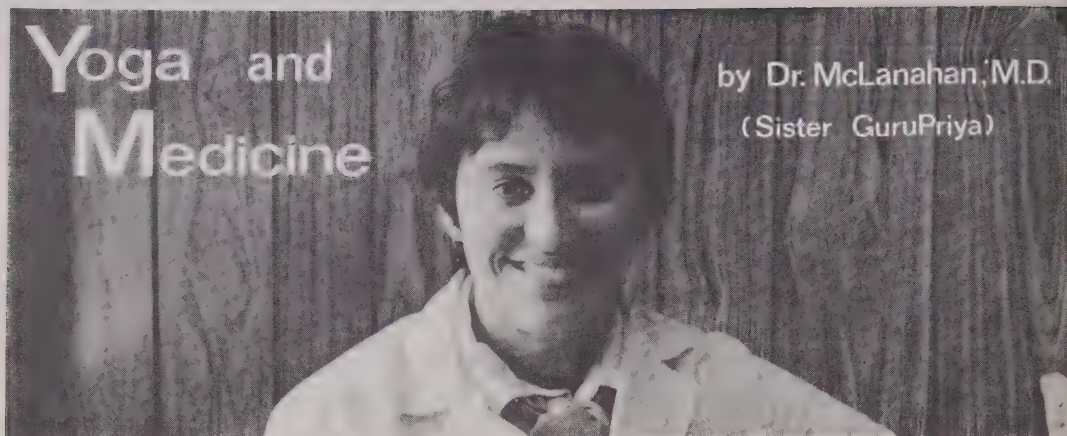
As in the practice of Yoga, so in the practice of Haiku, one constantly rediscovers the sacredness of “ritual with meaning.” There are “many paths: One Truth.” So in poetry, one may choose to write narrative poetry, free verse, Elizabethan sonnets; but if one chooses to write Haiku, one knowingly embraces an abiding and ancient structure.

If I embrace my Guru, I voluntarily bow to His will. If I embrace an art form, here too I bow to His will.

Each morning, directly after meditation, I now sit down to write Haiku. This period has become an integral part of my practice, an extension of my meditation, heightening for me my daily spiritual experience.

Like all art, writing is the invisible made visible. It is not given to us to create art but only to reveal it. And to reveal it with an utmost of purity and humility, we must employ the finest of tools.

One such tool is Haiku.



Have you ever seen a small child brought into a room of adults and noticed how all eyes turn to look at that child? What is it that draws all attention there? I think it is the glow which emanates from a child's face, the glow of real health — which we are born with.

If we are by nature radiant like that child, what causes us to lose that health and ease and fall into dis-ease? Disease doesn't just come walking down the street and wham! you've got pneumonia. The answer must be: something in the way we live causes us to lose our natural ease and make a welcome home for dis-ease. This kind of understanding forms the foundation of the natural approach to medicine. In this light, any health problem can be analyzed to find its underlying cause. Behind the complicated names and patterns of disease lies a common source: unnatural living. A child begins life with a perfectly healthy body. Yet somehow, gradually, unnatural ways of living become habit in the majority of adults.

When I was in medical school, one of the things most distressing to me was the number of patients whose problem was a result of one of four things: obesity, alcohol, cigarettes or tension. And the way in which medicine was usually practiced, there was nothing which went to the root cause: the patients' unnatural living.

This is how I came to incorporate a yogic approach along with my medical training. Yogic or natural medicine offers positive practices to root out the negative ones which have come into our lives and taken away that natural health of childhood. The old toxins from previous bad habits are cleaned out of the system and the practices help in keeping new ones out, thereby maintaining the glowing health that is gained. This is not only curative; it also slowly shifts the focus from concentrating on disease to an approach of truly preventive medicine.

The basic principle of Yoga and spiritual life is that we are essentially not our bodies, made up of the elements, but rather the Spirit or Consciousness behind. We see proof for this in knowing that every cell in the body is replaced every seven years. So no-body on earth is really older than seven years! Even more striking is the fact that every red blood cell is replaced every four months. So we can renew ourselves on the physical plane by correct diet. Here is a practice to try: during your next meal really *look* at your food. Think of the small red cells which are constantly being born as you eat. If you eat foods in their natural state (unprocessed), all the necessary elements are provided for these cells. On the other hand, if you eat, for example, white flour or white sugar, there is evidence now



that this may produce cancer of the colon and higher rates of heart disease.

And it's not just the *quality* of the food that affects the health. If we take too much *quantity*, no matter how pure, it becomes like a huge log on a small fire: the digestive fire gets smothered.

But we are not just what we eat; we are also what we breathe. We speak of organic food often, but we forget that there is also "organic air": the fresh air of outdoors so often forgotten in our indoor oriented lives. Just as the food becomes transformed in us as cells, the air makes possible their metabolism. We eat only two or three times a day. But we breathe fifteen times a minute! We are having ceaseless commerce with air. But ordinarily we do not use our full capacities; we can take in seven times more air than we do. Because we do not use our full capacity, even occasionally, our systems become sluggish.

Experiment: Take a full exhalation right now, where you are sitting, and then a nice deep inhalation. Slowly exhale. Regard how you feel. More alert? You become according to how you breathe.

### *Positive Thinking*

Though each of us has a mind, we are not the mind any more than we are the body: thoughts come and go even more quickly than do cells. But still, where the thoughts lead, in that direction we grow. Take a paper and pen and list all the things you have been thinking about in the last half hour. What you meditate on, you become. Usually we are not aware of the effect of our thinking on our bodily health. However, one's state of mind affects the body very much. Ultimately, it is our negative thoughts and feelings that lie behind most tensions and diseases. It is partly because the small child is so free from egoism, greed and delusion that his face glows with health.

Thoughts are expressed on the

physical level as nerve discharges and as hormones released by the various glands. These hormones influence all the functions of the body. Modern research is even being done by Dr. Carl Simonton of Boulder, Colorado, on using the mind alone, by concentrating, to reduce the size of tumors. Every body cell is ultimately controlled by the mind either directly, through the conscious thoughts, or indirectly through autonomic (unconscious) nerves and by the hormone system.

The natural elements that compose body and mind can be used in healing. This is the central principle of the natural medicine I practice together with the traditional or allopathic medicine. In natural medicine we begin by asking, what is it in the life that is causing the problem? Then the prescription uses nature itself to take us back to the natural state. In some cases the root cause is obscured, but even in that case, just by calling on the natural physicians of pure food and air and positive thoughts, diseased elements can be replaced by vital ones.

In future columns I would like to illustrate this interpretation of Yoga and medicine by applying specific Yoga practices — diet, fasting, herbal medicines, special exercises and other techniques — to a variety of common complaints. Your specific questions are welcome.

Of course, in the end, all our disease has its source in losing connection with our common Source. When we lose communion with our higher Self, we look for satisfaction to overeating or in the poisons of cigarettes and alcohol. But as we begin to overcome our separative egoistic thinking and come to know our nature as Sat-Chit-Ananda — existence-knowledge-joy — disturbing habits will fall away naturally and we will rest in peace, joy, and perfect health.

# Om Cooking

## I Love You, Honey



Refined sugar (commonly known as 'white' sugar) is usually regarded as an energy food. However, ample evidence proves that it robs the body of vitamins, disrupts calcium metabolism and has a deleterious effect on the nervous system. Recent scientific evidence\* even indicates that refined sugar may be responsible for the sharp increase in the incidence of cancer, hypertension, diabetes, schizophrenia and other diseases. So, from the nutritional point of view, the current exorbitant sugar prices may well be a blessing that could lead the American consumer, who has been eating sugar at the rate of 100 pounds per year, to look elsewhere for 'quick energy'.

Refined white sugar is 99.9% sucrose. Sucrose is the simple sugar molecule found in sugar cane and sugar beets, from which the vitamins and minerals of the whole cane or beet have been completely removed during 'refinement.'

Sucrose does produce energy and heat when burned in the body's metabolic furnace, but it is the same kind of energy and heat produced by pouring gasoline into an open fire — a big explosion followed by a dense cloud of smoke.

Sucrose is digested so quickly that it forces the body to pump insulin from the pancreas in a panicky fashion; the result is that the blood sugar

(glucose) level falls below normal and the body calls for more. This is the cause of the 'sweet tooth' so many people have. Sugar gives a quick boost, then robs the body which then calls for more and more.

Of course, the body does need sugar (glucose) to burn; the muscle tissues as well as the brain must have glucose to do their jobs. Glucose is made from carbohydrate foods, which are digested in the small intestine. Carbohydrates are complex sugar molecules, meaning that they are made from small sugar molecules hooked together in the presence of proteins and minerals in the natural state, which can digest more evenly, without straining the whole system.

Of course, much of this is known to health-conscious individuals, and as a result many people avoid the consumption of sugar as much as possible (though you may be surprised to know just how pervasive the use of sugar is in many common food preparations not normally considered 'sweets,' for example, baby food, cold cereals, canned foods, catsup, peanut butter, breads...). But not so well known is the status of 'brown' and so-called 'raw' sugar, which are widely regarded as more natural and healthier products.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. What is commonly called 'raw' sugar is 96% sucrose, according to the Sugar Association in Washington, D.C. The widely known Turbinado sugar (which gets its name from the Spanish word meaning 'spun' or 'whirled' — referring to the centrifugal spinning process which separates the molasses from the sugar crystals in the first

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\**Body, Mind and Sugar* by Dr. E.M. Abrahamson; *Diet and Disease* by Drs. Cheraskin, Ringsdorf and Clark; *Sweet and Dangerous* by Dr. John Yudkin.



refining of the cane syrup) weighs in at 96-98% sucrose. Brown sugar is a similar product, in this case sucrose colored with 6-8% molasses. Thus, brown sugar, made from a base of the same white sugar its purchasers may be hoping to avoid, is nothing more than white sugar wearing a mask.

So the question is: what can we use as a sweetener if we want to avoid sugar? One answer is to experiment with unrefined sugar cane syrup, date sugar, molasses, maple syrup or carob syrup and carob molasses.

But the most common answer is: use honey. If not processed, honey is one of nature's great foods, rich in natural sugar, vitamins and minerals, and extremely easy to digest. Generally it can be substituted for sugar by using one half the amount of honey as the recipe calls for sugar. (But a note of warning - the consistency is different and some things won't come out with the same texture, notably cookies. In making cookies, you'll have more success with recipes designed especially for honey.)

To encourage the substitution of honey for sugar in the diet, this month's OM COOKING features honey recipes by Padma Wick of Seattle, from her as yet unpublished honey cookbook.

## OATMEAL COOKIES

### Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup butter
- 1 cup honey
- 1 tbsp. sour cream
- 1/4 cup water
- 3 cups oats, uncooked
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tsp. salt

Beat butter, honey, sour cream and

vanilla until smooth. Then add flour and blend. Add water and mix thoroughly. Stir in the oats. Add carob chips, raisins, or freshly ground coconut, as you wish. Bake at 350 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes.

## HONEY PEACH JAM

(easily adapted to any other fruit jam)

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups crushed peaches
- 1 package pectin
- 6 cups honey
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 tsp. ginger
- 1 tsp. grated lemon rind

Crush fruit thoroughly and stir in pectin. Heat to full boil. Add honey, lemon juice, ginger and fruit rind. Boil hard (about 212 degrees) for 4 minutes. Remove from fire, skim and pour into hot, sterilized jars. Seal with parafin.

## BASIC MUFFINS

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups sifted whole wheat flour
- 2 tbsp. honey
- 2 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tbsp. sour cream
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup butter, melted and cooled slightly

Stir honey, baking powder and salt together. Mix sour cream, milk and butter. Add liquid mixture to dry ingredients and stir until flour is moistened. Spoon into well greased muffin tins. Bake 25 minutes at 400 degrees. Serve immediately if possible.

Variations: Mix 3/4 cup chopped cranberries and 1/4 cup honey. Add to dry ingredients.

Add 1/2 cup dry pitted dates.

# CHILDREN'S CORNER

## A Fable

by Sumuki

Of all the mothers in the forest, Mrs. Wren was perhaps the proudest, the day she felt her son was ready. It was a still, sunlit spring morning. She turned to her little bird.

'Fly, my son,' she murmured.

'Fly, mother?'

'Yes, fly.' She gave him a feathered prod. The small bird fell like a stone to the earth. Distressed, his mother flew down and carried him back up to the nest. Again she pushed him. Again he fell. After her third unsuccessful try the mother's wail resounded through the forest. 'My son can't fly!'

Her grieving reached the ears of all the creatures, and slowly they began to gather near. Chipmunks popped curiously from their holes, snakes wriggled rapidly, and birds of all kinds fluttered to available branch space.



A speck in the blue sky spiraled down toward the scene, and soon all could see it was a mighty eagle. Settling himself on a large branch above the wrens, he assured the mother in an important voice, 'I heard your cry, Mrs. Wren. Don't fear. I shall teach your little son myself the glory and freedom of flying. He shall soon know the excitement of dipping, circling and soaring high in the great blue heaven above us.'

'Oh, thank you, sir!' cried the grateful mother. A chorus of appreciative ahs rose from all the creatures.

The noise had awakened a huge owl, and now everyone watched as he slowly flew to a branch opposite the eagle.



Blinking his eyes sleepily in the sunlight, he ponderously stated to Mrs. Wren, 'I shall be glad myself to explain to your little one the science of flying. I shall point out the structure of the wings, the nature of the air currents, etc.'

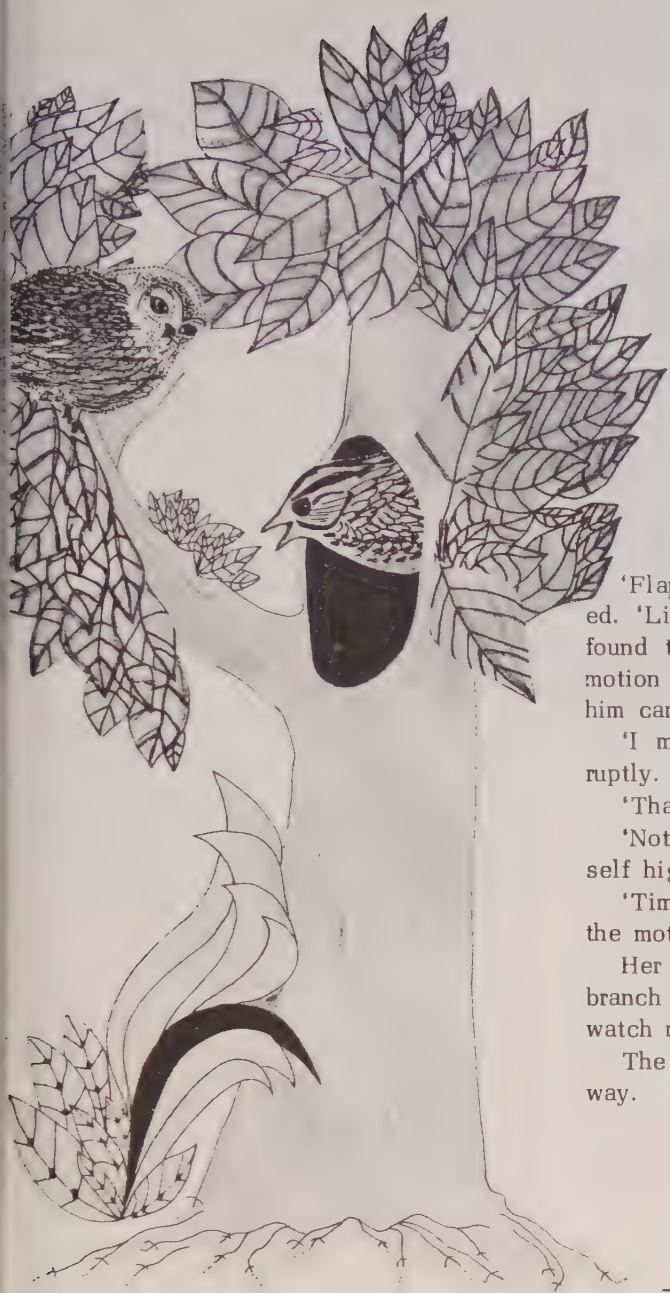
'Thank you, sir,' said Mrs. Wren, now a bit apprehensive as she glanced at the eagle. His feathers had become a bit ruffled at the interruption of his performance, and he said, 'I don't think, Owl, that the scientific approach is the correct one at all. The young one needs to be inspired to fly, not weighed down with useless information.'

All eyes swung toward the owl, who coolly replied, 'My dear Eagle, what good is it to be inspired if one doesn't know what one is doing? Understanding is everything.'



The debate went on. The sun grew high. Some of the forest creatures listened with interest while others napped. Others went off for lunch. A small sparrow happened by. 'What's the trouble?' he asked another bird.





'Flap your wings,' the sparrow repeated. 'Like me.' The little bird did so, and found to his delight that he was soon in motion in the air. The conversation above him came to a halt.

'I must be going,' said the eagle abruptly. 'If you'll excuse me.'

'Thank you,' said the mother gratefully.

'Not at all.' And the eagle lifted himself high in the air.

'Time for a nap,' rumbled the owl. And the mother thanked him too.

Her son was taking short hops from branch to branch, squeaking, 'Oh mother, watch me. Watch!'

The sparrow had already gone on his way.



'Can't fly.' The bird motioned to the little one who was now resting his head on the edge of the nest. The small sparrow flew up through the words that were flung back and forth between the giant birds, and hovered by the baby wren. 'Flap your wings,' he said. 'Pardon me?' asked the small bird.

Illustrations by JayaLakshmi William



*Dr. McLanahan and patient*

March 19, 1975 marked the opening of Satchidananda Clinic (West) in Putnam, Connecticut, staffed by Dr. McLanahan (Sr. GuruPriya) and her receptionist and assistant, Sr. Janaki. The consecration and blessing was performed by Sri Swamiji and attended by the members of the Ashram family and nearby householder couples. Swamiji performed a simple puja (worship service). Chanting was done to fill the place with divine vibrations and then some of the senior householder disciples spoke their feelings about this auspicious beginning. Sudharshan spoke about how he was encouraged by GuruPriya's courageous entrance into the skeptical and orthodox medical profession to enter medical school himself, and how he felt this was the small beginning of a potentially great change in this field.

Afterward, Amma spoke of her pride in us and hope for the future. Hari spoke of how Swamiji's disciples — who a few years ago were hippies and renegades from society — were now beginning to represent Swamiji's

teachings and to serve humanity each in their own individual way and with their own natural capacities. And every one had to agree with Swamiji that it was truly the Divine Power using us in ways we could never have imagined or brought about ourselves.

From the first couple months of GuruPriya's practice, it seems that there are many who need and want her services and that the Clinic will grow more and more in the months and years to come. Her dream is to one day be able to open an enlarged clinic here at the Ashram, one that would not only serve the needs of the surrounding communities, but also research and document the benefits of the yogic approach to medicine.

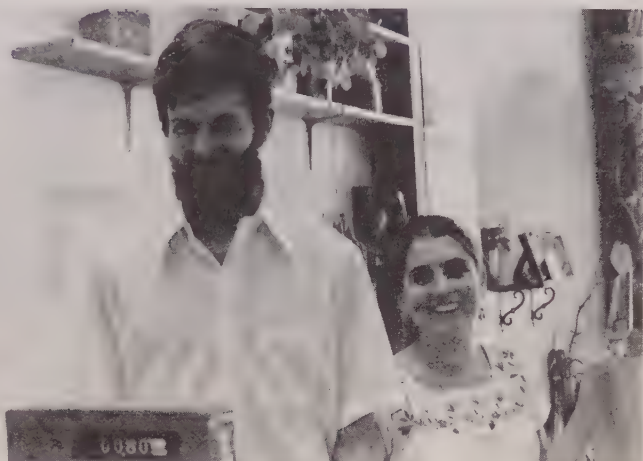
To get an insight into Dr. GuruPriya's medical philosophy, please see her article on page 16 of this issue. And as the Clinic asks only donations based on patients' financial situation, all donations of supplies, equipment or money to the Clinic are sincerely appreciated.

Two days later, the eve of spring's



# ...and Health Food Store Of Service

*Maheshwara and Kamala  
in the health food store*



entrance into the cold of New England found Sri Swamiji, the Ashram family and many members of the East Coast IYIs and groups engaged in another consecration ceremony — this time of a new Integral Yoga Natural Foodstore called 'Anna Poorna.' The store is also in downtown Putnam, in fact directly beneath the Clinic on the main street of town. (This is now the 3rd Integral Yoga Natural Foodstore, the first two being located in Santa Cruz and in New York City.)

Again, there was a beautiful puja and kirtan (chanting) and Maheshwara, the store manager, spoke humbly and sincerely that he might be used by the Divine Mother (Anna Poorna) to serve the community well. Swamiji also asked for the Mother's blessings and requested that Mahesh begin and end each day's business with a prayer at the small altar near the store's entrance. In this way he would feel that he was serving prasad (the blessed food received from God Himself) to the customers, and the customers themselves would come to feel that they

were receiving prasad and just leaving an offering in the form of their money. Everyone was really inspired to learn of this divine way of conducting business as a service.

The following morning, the first day of spring, we held the opening for the general public. Ganesh, the Ashram's natural food bus, came and sold 'Baba burgers' and other goodies as a promotion for the store; free samples were given out in the store itself, and much business as well as goodwill was exchanged between ourselves and a large number of townspeople who came — many for the first time — to a natural foods store.

We ask the Lord to bless these two new ventures — to serve as examples of Yoga in life, to let everyone see that Yoga is not just sitting in a cave somewhere, but rather giving constant testament to the Divinity in everyone and everything through continuous and loving service to all.

Om shanthi shanthi shanthi

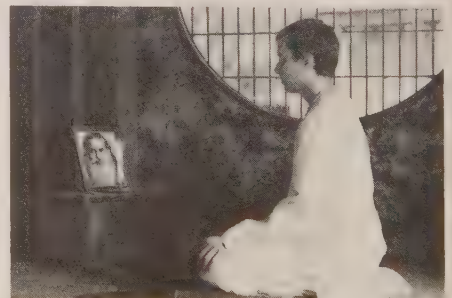
# Posture for Meditation

by Sri Swami Satchidananda

Before you go into your meditation, see that you sit in one posture. If you are a beginner, unused to sitting in one posture, try to see in which position you can sit comfortably for a longer time. Don't worry about putting the leg this way or that – half lotus, full lotus or anything. Any way that is comfortable for you is fine – except the horizontal position – even though that is really comfortable! I say this because, if you are going to lie down, the very next minute you will be in “samadhi” (superconscious state) communicating with some celestial being. (I mean you'll be snoring!) We don't want that kind of “samadhi” – because, do you know whose spine is horizontal? Every animal except the human beings. You can see the evolution: the first creatures were horizontal, on the ground. They were spineless. Then they developed a spine, but it remained very close to the ground, crawling on the ground. Then when the legs come in, the spine slowly raises above the ground but still horizontal. And then, slowly, the spine raises more toward the vertical and at this point you have the orangutan and chimpanzee. When the spine becomes completely vertical then you are a human being. Isn't it so? So if you want to go back to the horizontal position, I don't know what to say! Better for us to be human beings, hm? Keep the spine erect always because, through the spine, certain psychic forces, your spiritual

force, will ascend. So the ladder must be straight for it to climb.

Don't worry about your legs. You don't need to keep on changing them. You may say, “Oh, I'm a beginner; how can I keep in one posture?” That thinking itself is going to make it difficult. Instead simply say, “I'm just going to put my legs this way. They're going to be there; they should be there.” Look at your legs and say, “Hey, I've been listening to you and obeying you all these days; now you must listen to me and obey me. I'm going to put you in this position for half an hour. Make no complaints. Even if you complain I am not going to listen to you. I know you're not going to break.” Be very strict, very positive about it. Your own firmness will be understood by these limbs. Don't think they are ignorant or something inert. They have consciousness. Every cell knows what you are thinking, what you are going to do. So you address your legs, “My ankles, my thighs, my calf muscles, you are all going to be OK.” Your firmness is very important. That will help you to sit long. With all that, if it is really going to be very painful, there is no point in meditating on the pain. So, change a little bit. That will take care of it – because it's satisfied: “Ha, I won a victory over him. Because I wanted to move, he moved me.” That's fine. Make it happy. But still, if you can achieve a firm pose, your meditation will be better.





# *news of* **SWAMIJI**

Shortly before the holidays, Swamiji flew to California, and on Sunday, December 22, the IYIs of California had the honor of hosting the 60th Jayanthi (birthday) celebration in tribute to him. Held at the Wilshire-Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles, over 1300 people came to pay homage.

Musical offerings were presented by Alice (Turiya Aparna) Coltrane, John (Janakan) Fahey, Stephen (Siva) Fiske, Sunbow (Mahesh, Parvathi and friends) and others. Lee Taylor-Young gave a brief talk, and a very special blessing was the kirtan tribute by Sant Keshavadas and his wife Rama Mata. Sally (Satya) Kirkland acted as MC.

There were many spectacular presentations. Satya narrated Swamiji's life in poetry while slides of his life and work faded on and off a screen which covered the entire stage. Aparna and her orchestra joined at the end

as a ballet from Hatha Yoga postures was performed. As a grand finale, a 3-tier birthday cake – large enough for everyone at the celebration to have a piece – was presented to Swamiji.

The magnificence of the celebration was rivaled only by the greatness of the 'behind the scenes' Karma Yogis that made it all possible. Somehow, every detail was handled by someone who came forward – each an expert in his or her own field. We'd like to thank them all – and especially Muktan and Satya – for their untiring selfless service.

*Santa Barbara*

On December 23, Ishwara Cowan drove Swamiji to his seaside home in Santa Barbara. Ish and his wife Brahmi, long-time devotees, expressed their great happiness to have Swamiji stay in their home throughout his visit



Photo: Evan Mills

*Swamiji with California devotees at the Jayanthi celebration*



Swamiji and Ishwara

to the West Coast. It would be an understatement to say Swamiji enjoyed his stay with them; there is a tremendous love between Swamiji, as the spiritual father, and his children, Ish and Brahma. The West Coast is warm, not only in climate but in the hearts of the people there – so much so that a permanent home was bought for Swamiji in Santa Barbara, where he could live six months out of each year. We know this news will make many very happy. Already many of the West Coast devotees have moved to the Santa Barbara area to be near him, and have held meetings to talk about a possible Yoga community there.

Swamiji's home was bought through the assistance of an agent, Ann Hiller. Though completely new to Yoga, she became so interested that she even gave her commission to the IYI work.

The New Year began with a 5-day retreat at Santa Barbara's 'La Casa de Maria.' The retreatants enjoyed both beautiful weather and an inspiring site, but best of all were blessed with Swamiji's presence as he gave satsang (spiritual discourse) each evening.

Following the retreat, Sister Usha was made head of the LA IYI, while Brother Narayan, dear brother and treasurer, moved to Denver to head the Institute there.

The next morning Swamiji began a three-week rest in the warm sunshine of California, and especially of his Santa Barbara family: Ish, Brahma, Ramesh and Lila, Madhavan and his family and many others.

### Washington

Toward the end of January, Swamiji flew to Olympia, Washington to participate in the 'Interfaith Symposium' sponsored by Evergreen College. The theme was spiritual community life. Judith Rizzio, one of the wonderful organizers, knows Swamiji and was formerly a student at the New Jersey IYI. She was so happy that Swamiji accepted her invitation to come and give the concluding talk of the Symposium. The 800 participants seemed charmed by Swamiji's explanation of the meaning behind the Garden of Eden: "You are entitled to act, but not to the fruit of the action." It was inspiring to see followers of various faiths coming together in such large numbers.

The following evening Swamiji had dinner with the Sufi Choir who gave concerts during the Symposium. Many of us are familiar with their wonderful spiritual music and they themselves reflected that same spirit in their reception of Swamiji.

On the way back to Santa Barbara, after the Symposium, Swamiji stopped between flights to visit Mr. and Mrs. Bolliger in Seattle. They are the parents of Sister Bala and are very dear to him. And back in Santa Barbara the following evening, Swamiji gave a talk at the La Borro Theater, organized by Lynn Sargis.



## Hawaii

In February Swamiji made a two-week visit to Hawaii where his loving hosts, Steve and Irene Au, had been patiently waiting his visit for the past six months. In typical Hawaiian fashion, as Swamiji got off the plane he



Swamiji with Steve and Irene Au

was greeted with leis of ginger and jasmine flowers.

Steve and Irene are exemplary hosts and devotees. They gave up their home entirely to Swamiji and slept on the floor alongside Ramaa and Usha — who were traveling with Swamiji — and they set aside their busy lives to put themselves completely at his service.

While in Hawaii Swamiji spoke at Patricia and John Diegal's Mystic Isle Central Bookstore, which is also known as 'The Center' in Honolulu, as classes in Yoga, natural healing, astrology, etc., are held there. He also answered questions 'live' on Radio KORL, where the program's host, Diana Neff, was so inspired that she said interviewing Swamiji was the highest experience she had

ever had on radio. Swamiji was also interviewed by Helen Vincent of Radio KNDI.

The highlight of the visit to Honolulu was a 3-day retreat conducted by Swamiji for 80 participants. The people of Honolulu were really thirsty to learn about yogic life and didn't want Swamiji to leave when the retreat was over.

While on the Islands, Swamiji flew to Kauai, to visit Master Subramuniya and his ashram. He was warmly welcomed by Master and by his students. They shared with Swamiji in many ways, showing him the beautiful meditative life they lead, and Swamiji in turn shared his thoughts with them.

Swamiji also visited the island of Maui where a long-time devotee, Mithra Grossman, invited him to give a public talk. Mithra runs a health food store on the island and many on the island live a natural yogic life; for example, just driving on the road you can see many people practicing Hatha Yoga out of doors. At the talk, Swamiji praised the natural life and encouraged all to give up the artificial, often destructive habits commonly accepted by modern society.

## Cross Country

The completion of Swamiji's two and a half month visit to the West Coast was prefixed by several more satsangs — a going-away party in Santa Barbara at Ish and Brahmi's home, a satsang at the LA IYI, and a two-day stop in Dallas, Texas, where he gave a talk at the Unitarian Church on 'Universal Peace.'

Swamiji was physically a little tired after such extensive traveling and thought of giving just the one program in Dallas. But as is typical when he feels the sincere interest of people, he just can't help giving and

giving. And so, the two day visit included a touching marriage ceremony for Murali and Robin Harris, a mantra initiation, a very beautiful reception at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Ornish, and a visit with the Petri family. Swamiji stayed at the home of the Huffstutlers who were so happy to be with him again.

### Florida

Swamiji spent the next two weeks at the Ashram before his next excursion. Then, in early March, he left for Orlando, Florida, where Lalitha and Jagadeesh McCabe have recently started an Integral Yoga teaching center. He gave a public lecture to a large and eager audience at the Unitarian Church in Orlando and was afterward presented the key to the city of Orlando by a Catholic sister, Sr. Dorothy Dawes, on behalf of the mayor. The following Saturday was officially proclaimed 'Swami Satchidananda Day' in Orlando.

On the 9th, after a reception at the United Campus Ministry of Rawlins College in Winterpark, Florida, Swamiji participated in a symposium at the Florida Technological University, entitled "How to Deal with Pain," coordinated by Dr. Robert Flick. He spoke along with Geshin Chenney of the Mount Baldy Zen Center and Dr. and Mrs. Nelson Shu, acupuncturists. Each gave a short talk and/or demonstration and then had dialogue with the audience. The Symposium was so well attended that many people had to stand in the aisles and doorways.

The next day, the McCabes took Swamiji on an excursion to Disney World along with their small son. Together with the evening before, it showed not only how Swamiji possesses deep wisdom but also the wonder and funloving nature of a small child.

He especially loved the Monsanto 'Round the World' ride and the fire engine.

### New York City

Swamiji's next trip was to New York City for the weekend of March 15-16. He gave an inspired public lecture to about 900 people at St. John the Divine Church in Manhattan, where many devotees have known Swamiji since he first came to the United States in 1966. The next day Swamiji gave satsang live over WBAI radio, and that evening he was invited, along with about 30 members of the Ashram and the New York IYIs, to the wedding dinner of his devotees Kamala and Sukumar. It was held at the world-famous Indian restaurant, Gaylord's, and was made possible through the generosity of Mr. George Harilela. It was really a joyous occasion as Swamiji and his children were so attentively served the various delicious courses of a huge Indian feast by the restaurant staff.

### The Bahamas

Soon after, for 7 days, from March 30 to April 4, Swamiji took part in a uniquely beautiful International Yoga Teachers Congress arranged by his brother monk Sri Swami Vishnudevanandaji. It was held in the Bahamas on what is aptly named Paradise Island. For those days it was a paradise as over 500 seekers enjoyed the uplifting company of many of the greatest minds and hearts of our age. Along with Swamiji and Swami Vishnuji were Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, who is the president of the Divine Life Society in Rishikesh, India, and a fourth brother monk, Sri Swami Nadasabrahamanandaji, master of Taan, the science of sound vibration. The con-





*In the Bahamas: Ambassador Kaul, Sri Swamiji, Swami Chidananda, Swami Vishnudevananda, and Swami Nadabrahmananda with students*

ference was also graced by the presence of Yogi Bhajan, Sri Yogeswar Muni, Senator Eugene McCarthy, the Reverend Ralph Abernathy, and His Excellency T.N. Kaul, the Indian Ambassador to the United States.

Swamiji was joined on his flight by his disciple Peter Max, who had also been invited to participate in the Congress. As he arrived at the Island, already crowded with colorful students, he was greeted by Swami Vishnu's all-encompassing 'Bear Hug.' All of the special guests met and talked informally, and then joined the larger group for opening ceremonies where each one offered a small prayer.

Reverend Abernathy spoke beautifully on the harmonious brotherhood he felt in the Yogic teachings, comparing it with the goal of his predecessor, the late Dr. Martin Luther King. He said that upon arriving at this conference he hadn't understood why he had been requested to remove his shoes, but after seeing and experiencing the Yogic spirit, he now understood that "the ground on which we walk here is holy ground."

Senator McCarthy also spoke, saying

that he had had no previous understanding of Yogic philosophy and so had arrived a few days early to "get acquainted." He expressed sincere appreciation of what he had been experiencing of the Yogic spirit, of the purity of motivation inspired by the teachings. After he spoke, Swami Vishnu expressed the hope that more figures in the political field learn about Yoga. Ambassador Kaul spoke briefly on his experience in the Yogic field since childhood and offered his own assistance in the Embassy to help propagate this work.

The next days were filled with inspiring programs, beginning with early morning meditations by each speaker and interspersed with beautiful musical programs by flutist Paul Horn, chanting by Bhagavan Das, sitar by Shambu Das, and songs by Stephen (Siva) Fiske. A group of musicians called JUDD met and fell in love with Swamiji there. On the last day they requested him to speak with them and explain how they could best "channel their energy, as they reach so many people." Swamiji asked why they wanted to reach people and lovingly told them to

find that source of peace within and then use their music as an expression to inspire others.

On Easter Sunday, a morning Ecumenical service was followed by a boat procession around the entire island. All the participants gathered on about 12 or 15 boats which gaily followed the lead boat, all singing the Lord's name amidst the radiant sun and sparkling waters.

Monday evening was Swamiji's scheduled talk. He emphasized the practical aspects of spiritual life and explained that each aspirant can and should feel beautiful changes taking place within his daily life and should not be content with mere ideas and talk.

One day as Swamiji walked onto the white sparkling beach for a swim, Yogi Bhajan was just walking out of the waves and they ran towards each other and embraced — a sight so magnificent that all other activity stopped. Together they swam and played, surrounded by the perfect blue of ocean

and sky, Yogiji's brilliantly smiling face under bobbing white turban and Swamiji, legs in full lotus, floating so easily in the Fish Pose on the water's surface.

So many beautiful events took place, so much inspiration was given and received. Besides the arranged talks, there were many spontaneous satsangs which began with a seeker seizing the opportunity to ask a sincere question as Swamiji passed by and ended hours later with a hundred seekers sitting at his feet beneath the swaying palms.

The day of leave-taking came all too soon, but was truly memorable. Swami Vishnu, Swami Chidanandaji and Swamiji shared with all their experiences and joys as spiritual seekers at the feet of their beloved master, Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

Swami Vishnu told how when he met Sivananda for the first time, his mind had mentally refused to bow down to any earthly being, and at that moment Swami Sivananda came and touched his feet. Swami Chidanandaji shared an unexpected revelation, that he had come to know of his master through an article of his published in a less than reputable magazine, explaining amidst laughter that Sivananda knew how to reach the people who needed his help most. And lastly, Swamiji spoke lovingly of his master, and how he has known only peace since he gave himself up to His will.

Hundreds gathered on the dock to bid farewell, as Swami Vishnu drove the boat round and round in circles as a final goodbye salute. In a mood of total relaxation and fun — devoid of any tension and stiffness which is so often mistakenly associated with spiritual life — all heard and experienced, through the channels of these holy men, the truth, the necessity and the joy of Life Divine.



*Sri Swamiji, Swami Vishnudevanandaji and Yogi Bhajan*



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Swami Satchidananda

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# Swamiji In The News

the village VOICE

## Swami Satchidananda: 'I am the dangerous drug'



by Roslyn Lacks

We take off our shoes at the door of the Holy Man's apartment. The quiet is almost palpable and tinged with the faint woody smell of incense. We pass through a small anteroom into the Swami's study—a modest rectangle with windows at the far end. The furnishing is simple and undistinguished except for a jar of roses on the coffee table, a wood carving of a Hindu deity in a dance pose, and a framed photograph of the Swami, hair and beard flowing, holding a bouncing blond baby in each arm.

The Swami rises to greet us, tall in a light saffron robe. His fingers are long and supple, his hands warm.

We sit and talk. First, about Swami's visit to New York in 1966.

"My friend said don't go to New York. It's a crazy city."

"Where was he from?"

"New York."

Laughter.

Swami continues: "Then he said, 'Go for two days.' He called Peter Max from Paris and said, 'Swami is arriving. Just meet him, show him around the city, and pack him off to California.' When I arrived, Peter Max called a few friends. We sat and discussed, talking and talking until late at night. The following morning, a few more came. A few more in the afternoon. For all the two days, I never came down from the 15th floor."

Five months later, the Swami left New York to complete his trip.

Letters from New York greeted the Swami when he returned to Ceylon. "What have

you done to my people?" the American ambassador asked him. "They all want you back."

He returned in 1967 and became a United States resident in 1968.

And now? Now, the Swami will start round the world again for five or six months, visiting centers in Europe, resting in Ceylon, continuing through Malaysia and the Far East. "This time," the Swami adds, "I think I will stop in Australia and New Zealand too."

He sits easy, relaxed, alert. One finds it hard to conceive that in a given week the Swami may travel from New York to Texas to Colorado to California and back to New York. For the moment, he is very much here—in this room with us.

"How did you form all these groups?" I ask.

"I have never formed any group," he replies. "Believe me, I don't organize groups. I am there and the groups form themselves."

"You see," the Swami continues, "I never ask them to do anything. If you switch on the light, the light is there. Should it tell you to read or write or play? You just use the light any way you want."

"Peace and tranquility is your true nature," the Swami asserts. "You don't need to go and get something to find peace, it is inside you, so long as you don't disturb it."

The Swami tells the story of the railway engineer who grew so accustomed to sleeping in a jolting railway car that he could no longer sleep in a quiet bed. "We get so used to being disturbed that we do not recognize peace when it comes. We don't appreciate it."

"Do you think this is true all over the world?"

"All over the world, all over the world. Now, you say that *problem*"—his voice gently parodies a hollow resonance—"that *narcotic problem*!" His voice returns to itself. "Narcotics is not a big problem, it is only a grown up brother to the nicotine drug. All of these people talk about narcotics. They want to

ban marijuana. Why not ban cigarettes? A slow poison can be more detrimental than a hard poison. He poses as your friend, but he slowly saps away your life, whereas when an enemy appears as an enemy, you are ready to face him.

"Why do these people want to take drugs? They want to be high, they want to be peaceful. But this state of peacefulness can never be induced by using a chemical. Even now, the doctors—they use sleeping pills, tranquilizers. Are they really bringing tranquility? Is the sleep a real sleep? I tell these people, if you induce sleep through your pill it is not real sleep, it is just a mere matter of fainting."

We return to the experience of the young heads—the psychedelic drug users who have been drawn to the Swami and yoga. The Swami recognizes his impact on them. "The more they came near me, the more they were forced, in a way, to stop. They didn't want to lose my affection. If Swami knows I am taking drugs, he will stop loving me?"

"No," he smiles. "They think that way, but of course I would not stop loving. But I may put it in a different way—see my child, I love you so much, but make me love you more."

"But something else must happen."

The Swami leans forward and asks softly, "What happens?"

"Something must replace the drug."

"In a sense," he replies, "they put me in that place. They replace drugs with me. When I go in there, there is no room for drugs." He laughs. "I am the dangerous drug for them."

My tape recorder bleeps the end of the reel.

"How do you find the body microphone?" the Swami asks.

I play back some of the tape to show him. Mild static blurs the playback. Has the battery run down? The Swami checks the battery indicator. "It's the head," he suggests, pointing to the metal bar that meets the cassette. "You have to de-magnetize the head," he says, smiling with a gesture that moves from the tape head to his own.

# Integral Yoga

Integral Yoga is a synthesis of the various branches of Yoga. It is a scientific system designed to bring about the harmonious development of every aspect of the individual. The following are the different branches of Integral Yoga.



**Raja  
Yoga**

The path of concentration and meditation. Based on ethical perfection and control of the senses, it leads ultimately to the state of *Samadhi* or Superconsciousness.



**Karma  
Yoga**

The path of selfless service. By performing duties without attachment to the fruits of the action, the Karma Yogi becomes a conscious instrument of Divine Will.



**Japa  
Yoga**

The concentrated repetition of a *mantram* (a sound vibration representing an aspect of the Divine), leading to awareness of this vibration and attunement with it.



**Bhakti  
Yoga**

The path of love and devotion to God, to an incarnation of the Divine or to a spiritual teacher. The Bhakti Yogi transcends his limited personality and attains union with the Divine.



**Hatha  
Yoga**

Postures (*asanas*), breath control (*pranayama*), deep relaxation and cleansing practices (*kriyas*) to purify and strengthen the body and mind.



**Jnana  
Yoga**

The Yoga of wisdom. By study, self-analysis and awareness, the Jnana Yogi ceases to identify with the body and mind and realizes the Oneness.

---

The goal of Integral Yoga is: 'A body of perfect health and strength, mind with all clarity and control, intellect as sharp as a razor, will of steel, heart full of love and mercy, a life dedicated to the common welfare, and realization of the true Self.'

— Sri Swami Satchidananda